

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the non-final Office Action mailed January 10, 2007. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims are respectfully requested.

Present Status of Patent Application

Upon entry of the amendments in this response, claims 1-5, 8-10, 12, 14, and 17-21, and 23 remain currently pending in the present application. Specifically, claims 2-5, 10 and 12 are unamended original claims; claims 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 16, and 22 have been canceled without prejudice, waiver or disclaimer; claims 1, 8, 9, 14, 17-20, and 23 have been previously presented; and claim 21 has been currently amended with no addition of new matter. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims are respectfully requested.

A. Allowable subject matter

Applicants wish to place on record their sincere gratitude for Examiner's allowance of claims 1-5, 8-10, 12, 14, 17-20 and 23; and for indication of allowability of claim 22 subject to being rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

Response to Examiner's indication of allowability

Claim 22

Examiner has objected to claim 22, but has further indicated that the claim would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have currently canceled claim 22 and incorporated the subject matter of claim 22 into independent claim 21. As a result of the cancellation, Applicants respectfully assert that the objection to claim 22 has been rendered moot.

B. Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)

Statement of the Rejection

Claims 16 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by McNulty et al. (U.S. Patent 6,686,676).

Response to the Rejection

Claim 16

In the interests of moving forward prosecution in this case, Applicants have opted to cancel

claim 16 without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer. Consequently, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejection of this claim has rendered moot as a result of the cancellation.

Claim 21

Claim 21 has been currently amended to include the subject matter of canceled claim 22, which has been indicated as allowable matter in the Office action. Because of the indication of allowability, Applicants respectfully assert that claim 21 is now allowable and hereby request withdrawal of the rejection followed by allowance of claim 21.

Prior Art Made of Record

The prior art made of record has been considered, but is not believed to affect the patentability of the presently pending claims.

CONCLUSION

In light of the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that all pending claims 1-5, 8-10, 12, 14, and 17-21, and 23 are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby court-
eously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned representative at (404) 610-5689.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this paper is being electronically transmitted to the Commissioner for Patents on the date shown below:

Date of transmission: 20 March 2007

Signature: /P. S. Dara/

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